

Double Standards Apply to Peace Activists

by Margaret Sarfehjooy

If you speak out against U.S.-sponsored human rights violations, and you are not rich or powerful, you might get a visit from the FBI. The recent witch hunt against peace activists is expanding, and there are now 24 grand jury subpoenas served to peace activists based mostly in Minneapolis and Chicago. Although there have been no charges, the activists were informed that this investigation is about providing material support for foreign terrorist groups. Material support? I know the activists in Minneapolis, and they are union members, a retired nurse, a high-school teacher, a kitchen worker, a woman on disability?none who have the material means to support a "terrorist group." The Anti-War Committee, whose office was raided by FBI agents, has a yearly garage sale to meet its meager expenses.

Predicting no political gain for assisting a little-known group of "leftists" who criticize U.S. foreign policy, our senators in Washington have avoided protecting the activists' rights, using the excuse that "it is unethical to interfere with an ongoing investigation." Bradley Manning, a 22-year-old soldier from Oklahoma, is being investigated by the FBI for providing information to WikiLeaks. Senator Amy Klobuchar stated on CBS: "A lot of people believe he could get a prison term for the rest of his life and I think that would be appropriate." Wait a minute?isn't this an ongoing investigation? Do double standards apply when a senator's career might be enhanced by spouting the government line? What about international law? The Nuremberg Laws, established after the horrors of WWII, declare that soldiers have a legal obligation to resist war crimes. Is it more criminal to expose U.S.-sponsored war crimes, as Bradley Manning and the FBI-harassed peace activists have done?

Although it is a federal offense to provide material support to any terrorist organization listed by the State Department, double standards apply when powerful politicians decide that a terrorist organization can be helpful in doing Uncle Sam's dirty work, like destabilizing the government of Iran. Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), an Iranian exile group that worked side by side with Saddam Hussein and killed Iraqi and Iranian civilians, is a designated terrorist organization. Former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, former White House adviser Frances Townsend and former Attorney General Michael Mukasey flew to Paris in December and spoke at a conference sponsored by wealthy MEK supporters. Double standards again?the FBI has not issued any subpoenas to or raided the homes of these powerful politicians for openly and proudly supporting a State Department-designated terrorist organization.

Money and political connections can be powerful, but the truth is more powerful. If the activists are guilty of anything, they are guilty of exercising their free speech rights to expose the truth about U.S.-sponsored war crimes and human rights violations in Palestine, Colombia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world. We

can stop this witch hunt aimed at intimidating those who dare speak the truth about U.S. foreign policy. Please go to stopfbi.net to learn how you can help.

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